AMENDMENTS TO THE ABSTRACT

Please amend the abstract as follows:

[PROBLEMS] To provide an An image compression apparatus and method capable of performing compression with different image qualities within an image. [MEANS FOR SOLVING PROBLEMS] In a mosaic processing unit (16) of the image compression apparatus, area division means a filtering region divider (130) divides input image data into a plurality of filtering areas and at least some of the filtering areas are subjected to unification processing for each of the filtering areas by a filtering unit (131). On the other hand, a JPEG encoder (17) divides the image data after the mosaic processing into a plenty plurality of rectangular block areas and each of the block areas is subjected to the DCT processing and quantization processing. Here, the filtering area consists of adjacent one or more than one sets of rectangular areas each consisting of two or more pixels obtained by equally dividing the aforementioned block area by 2n (n is a natural number).